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ABSTRACT

The first of two parts of this document is a basic outline to be used in the preliminary preparation for a library accreditation visit. It is appropriate for use in a range of education/psychology/behavioral sciences libraries in an academic setting, from those of a small college library to those of a departmental library in a university library system. The preliminary questions for review preparation are organized alphabetically in seven broad subject areas: General Questions, Budget, Collections, Facilities, Personnel, Policy and Administration, and Services. Concluding the outline is a definition of terms. The second part, which was compiled and prepared by Victoria Clayton and Jamie W. Coniglio, contains an 11-item selective annotated bibliography and a list of 16 additional references. (MAB)

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GETTING STARTED: PREPARING FOR ACCREDITATION

Suggestions from librarians who have been there...

Prepared for: Education and Behavioral Sciences Section
Annual Program

"Accreditation and Review Strategies
in Education and Psychology"

Monday July 11, 1988
New Orleans, Louisiana

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This outline was developed by members of the Standards for Education Library Services Committee of the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section of the Association for College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association. The Committee began study of the need for such an outline in 1982, and completed the task in 1987.

The items listed are intended to supply a range of questions to assist in preliminary stages of accreditation preparation.

The Standards for Education Library Services Committee gratefully acknowledges the contributions and guidance of the Standards and Accreditation Committee of the Association of College and Research Libraries for their assistance in the work leading to this outline.

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Preface

Universities and colleges with professional training programs in various subject specialties are periodically evaluated by accreditation committees (other terms such as "council" or "team" are sometimes used) representing professional organizations. Examples are the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the American Psychological Association, the American Association for Counseling and Development, and the Council on Social Work Education. The library of an institution often comes under scrutiny as one of the elements contributing to a successful program of accreditation. Thus, an education/psychology/behavioral sciences library may be examined for the purpose of accreditation by a district, state, regional, or national professional organization. It is important to have appropriate questions asked, so that the dialogue can include a discussion of the function of the library in relation to the curriculum are being reviewed for accreditation. The preliminary questions in this outline are organized alphabetically in the following broad subject areas: general questions, budget, collections, facilities, personnel, policy and administration, and services.

Accreditation serves four major purposes:

1. to assure the public that particular institutions offer programs for the preparation of teachers and other professionals that meet national standards of quality;

2. to ensure that the public is served by well prepared personnel;

3. to advance the profession through the improvement of preparation programs; and

4. to provide a practical basis for reciprocity among the states in certifying professionals.[1]

This basic outline is to be used in preliminary preparation for an accreditation visit. This outline is appropriate for use in a range of education/psychology/behavioral sciences libraries in an academic setting, from those of a small college library to those of a departmental library in a university library system. The outline is intended to be useful to an accreditation team and to the librarian preparing for an accreditation visit. The team might use this list as a means of initiating dialogue. The librarian might use it as a basis for the library's self evaluation.

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[1] National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, Standards for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, rev. ed. (Washington, D.C.: NCATE, 1982), p. 3

OUTLINE FOR ACCREDITATION REVIEW PREPARATION

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Were the team members provided written information about the library prior to their visit?

Is the team scheduled to meet with the library director in order to gain an understanding of the overall library organization, philosophy, and funding support?

Is the team scheduled to meet with the librarian responsible for the administration, collection development, and other services of the education/psychology/behavioral sciences collection or library? Will there be time to meet with other library staff if desired?

Will the team discuss the library collections and services with faculty and students?

Will the team discuss access to the library collections, i.e. card catalogs, automated catalogs, remote catalogs, internal catalogs and the like; are materials in the specialized collections accessible from all access points, or only within the specialized collection?

BUDGET

Is the library materials budget reasonable for the number and range of academic programs, faculty and students served by the specialized collection?

Who controls and expends the library materials budget? Do both library staff and faculty participate?

Are various areas of the collection identified in the materials budget, e.g., periodicals, media, etc.?

COLLECTIONS

Will the person who is responsible for collection development meet with the evaluation team?

Do the reference and index/abstract collections contain the standard works necessary to support the academic program?

Is the periodical/serial collection adequate? Do the holdings include publications of appropriate professional associations? Are there backfiles of key periodical/serial titles?

Is the book collection adequate? Is the number of volumes adequate for the number of students enrolled and for the programs? Are standard works represented as well as the most recent titles published?

Are students and faculty involved in the collection development process?

Are library collections appropriate to support interdisciplinary studies?

For education, is there a curriculum or instructional materials collection which includes such elementary and secondary resources as textbooks, curriculum guides, tests, audiovisual materials, games, and other instructional media?

Is there provision for interlibrary loan of materials when the collection does not meet user needs?

Are efforts made to evaluate collections and to adjust to changing needs?

Are special collections (e.g., children's literature, psychological tests) adequate? Are the physical locations of special collections accessible?

Is there a written policy for collection development?

Are non-print resources ranging from audiovisual materials to electronic sources represented appropriately for the discipline under review?

FACILITIES

Is the library or collection easily accessible and readily identified?

Is the library functional and inviting? Does it have good lighting, acoustical treatment, and temperature and humidity control necessary for the comfort of its patrons and for the preservation of materials?

Is there adequate seating for library users? Are there individual accommodations for graduate students and faculty? Are there areas for small group study?

Are the facilities adequate in size to serve the present and projected programs and numbers of users?

Do the facilities provide for disabled users and staff?

Are the physical facilities conducive to study and research?

Do the facilities allow for effective use of all kinds of media, such as videotapes, compact discs, microforms, or microcomputer software?

Are the facilities adequate for efficient staffing and services? Is there adequate work space for the library staff? Is there privacy for staff to conduct in-depth interviews, to have conferences with students and faculty, or to consult with staff?

Is there provision for security of personnel, collections, and equipment?

Is the space flexible enough to provide for programmatic changes?

PERSONNEL

Is there a designated specialist of library services for the subject area under review?

How are librarians recruited? Are they specifically educated, trained and qualified both in the fields of library science and in the subject specialty under review? Does the budget provide salaries which attract and reward qualified personnel?

Is the size of the staff adequate for the workload? Does the staff include librarians, paraprofessional personnel, clerical personnel, and other support staff such as graduate assistants, and student library aides in appropriate proportion?

Do current, written job descriptions exist? Is there a professional development plan or a yearly plan of goals/objectives for each librarian? Are appropriate staff development activities available to the library staff?

Have training manuals and programs been designed and are there provisions for updating them?

What provisions are made for retention or tenure? What are the promotion criteria? Are performance-based evaluations made on a regular basis?

POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

Is there a mission statement for the library?

Are the goals and objectives compatible with the curriculum?

Is there an organization chart? Are the lines of authority clear?

Do current written policies exist, and how are they implemented?

Does the library maintain a working relationship with a) other campus information programs? b) with other libraries?

Is the library making use of newer technologies to provide information and service?

Is there provision for ongoing evaluation of the library by the library staff and the library's users?

SERVICES

Is the library open sufficient hours to meet user needs?

Are reference service hours sufficient to meet user needs?

Are the special and unique services provided by the library adequately promoted and supported?

What services are provided for the faculty?

Are reasonable services provided for disabled users, such as assistance in retrieving materials from shelves and files?

Are computer terminals available to reference staff for answering reference questions and for online searches?

Is formal bibliographic instruction available for users of the materials?

Are "hand out" information sheets or materials available to users?

Are circulation periods adequate for all categories of users?

Are appropriate directional signs and maps available for aiding the user in locating materials?

Are copiers available for copying paper and microform materials at a reasonable price?

DEFINITION OF TERMS

This set of definitions is intended to explain terms as they are used in the Accreditation Review Checklist. With the exception of "instructional materials," the definitions were written by the Committee.

COLLECTION - An assemblage of resources which contain recorded information. These might include: books, periodicals, pamphlets, computer software, microforms, videotapes, audiotapes, films, and various other print, audiovisual and electronic formats.

CURRICULUM COLLECTION - An assemblage of resources related to elementary and secondary school curricula; these resources might be intended as guides for the teacher or as classroom instructional materials. They might include: textbooks, curriculum guides, scope and sequence charts, learning activity packages, indexes to print and audiovisual resources, books, pamphlets, periodicals, kits, games, filmstrips, computer courseware, and various other print, audiovisual and electronic formats.

EDUCATION/PSYCHOLOGY/BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES LIBRARY - A separate or distinct library or collection which provides the services and resources necessary to support the programs of the college, school, or department of education/psychology/behavioral sciences in a college or university.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL - "Any device with instructional content or function that is used for teaching purposes, including books, textbooks, supplementary reading materials, audiovisual and other sensory materials, scripts for radio or television instruction, instruction sheets, and packaged sets of materials for construction or manipulation."[2]

USERS - The clientele of the library. These may include undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

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[2] Good, Carter V., ed. Dictionary of Education, 3rd ed., (New York : McGraw-Hill), 1983.

ACCREDITATION REVIEW AND THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY:
A SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Casserly, Mary F. "Academic Library Regional Accreditation." **College & Research Libraries.** 47:38-47 (January 1986).

Analyzes the self-study documents of 4 academic libraries involved in regional accreditation. The successful sites employed user or expert opinion as types of assessments in their reports. The libraries' annual reports were found to contain more quantitative assessments of processes and outputs than self-study reports.

Daniel, Evelyn H. "In the Brave, New Information World, What Changes Are Needed in Accreditation." **Library Journal.** 49-53 (April 1, 1985).

Discusses the multilevel process of postsecondary accreditation both institutional and program specific. Defines and examines the elements of accreditation. The evolution of the accreditation process is traced from being a private voluntary activity to a more public process. Four characteristics critical to the future of accreditation are outlined. Five broad areas in which there are proposals to change existing accreditation practices are discussed.

Davila, Daniel. "The Professional Librarian as an Evaluator for the Middle States Association." **Community & Junior College Libraries.** 4:17-24 (Fall 1985).

Outlines the policies and procedures of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Explains the role of the library/learning resources center (LRC) evaluator, and the significance of the LRC in the total evaluation process.

Forman, Sidney. "One Librarian's View of NCATE Standards." **Teachers College Record** 72:519-523 (May 1971).

Criticizes NCATE's "failure to make specific recommendations" or "to establish standards" regarding education libraries. A remedy is suggested. The standards should be revised based on a national study of education libraries as they exist "as well as a conceptualization of what such libraries should be." It is also suggested that other organizations such as ALA, particularly ACRL's Education and Behavioral Science Section, be involved in the development of new standards.

Kania, Antoinette M. "Academic Library Standards and Performance Measures." **College and Research Libraries.** 49:16-23 (January 1988).

Develops and proposes a model set of regional accreditation standards that include qualitative standards for accreditation. Suggests quantitative performance measures for in-house evaluation. A core of standards was identified through content analysis of existing library standards of the seven higher-education regional accreditation commissions. These elements were then matched with performance measures identified through the literature.

Libraries and Accreditation in Institutions of Higher Education. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, A Division of the American Library Association. 1981.

Proceedings of an ACRL Conference held in New York City, June 26-27, 1980, focusing on regional accreditation of instutions of higher education and their libraries. Topics discussed: academic library standards, library evaluation and the accrediting process. A selected annotated bibliography concludes this work.

Lindenfeld, Joseph F. "Your Role on an Accreditation Team: Evaluating Another Library." **Community & Junior College Libraries.** 4:25-34 (Fall 1985).

Offers guidance for the accreditation team member, focusing on the steps that will take place between the first invitation to become an evaluation team member and the preparation of the evaluation report. Covers the visit, interviewing and observing techniques, responsibilities to the committee, and report writing.

MacVean, Donald S. "An NCATE Evaluation of a University Library: A Case History." Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois. January 1979. ED 171240.

Documents the procedures and problems enountered during the evaluation of Western Illinois University's library by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and proposes recommendations for future evaluations of university libraries. Some of the problems cited: an unqualified library evaluator; the absence of a library specialist on the visiting team and the failure of the Provost and Dean of Education to check on visiting team's qualifications; the lack of library evaluation due to vague NCATE standards and unqualified evaluators.

Morrill, Richard L. "Library Service in Teacher Training Institutions." **Education Libraries**. 6:64-66, 76-77 (Fall 1981).

Reviews the historical development of departments and schools of education, and discusses the corresponding development of education libraries with respect to the quality of library services. The longstanding issue of establishing specific across the board standards--quantitative vs. qualitative--for the various education libraries is discussed.

Rockman, Ilene R. "Standards for Education Libraries." **Education Libraries**. 6:61-62 (Fall 1981).

Discusses the need for standards in education libraries and provides lists of criteria for standards in services, collection, personnel, facilities, budget, administration and goverance to be used as a starting point.

Totten, Herman L. "Identification of Library Elements in Statements of Accrediting Standards: A Review of the Literature." U.S. Educational Resources Information Center. 1974. **ED 121350**.

Reviews the literature on college library standards in order to tabulate the elements found in the latest statements of accrediting agencies and library organizations. First, the published standards and guidelines of library associations and accrediting agencies were considered individually. A chart was devised for tabulating these 16 publications against 20 elements possible for inclusion in standards. Information from two studies of accrediting agencies was also examined and tabulated in a similar way. These studies considered requirements for libraries made by 21 accrediting organizations in such areas a law, business, health, etc. The elements most often checked on both charts were: resources, staff, finances, services, facilities, and administration.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Casserly, Mary. "Academic Library Regional Accreditation." College and Research Libraries. 47:39-47 (January 1986).

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"Mission of an Undergraduate University Library Draft Model Statement." College and Research Libraries News, April 1987, p. 192-194.

Kania, Antoinette M. "Appendix A: Proposed Academic Library Standards for Use in Self-Study Processes and Regional Accreditation." College and Research Libraries, 49:22-23 (January 1988).

Knells, Herbert R. Self-Study Processes: A Guide for Post-Secondary Institutions. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education." 1980.

"Standards for College Libraries 1985." College and Research Libraries News. 46:241-52 (May 1985).

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Young, Kenneth E. Understanding Accreditation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 1983.

Yates, Dudley V. "An Analysis of Bases Used by Library Evaluators in the Accrediting Process of Colleges and Schools." (Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 1973).

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